DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2003-04

March 2003

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1. Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

In keeping with this Government's commitment to be more accountable to the public for its actions, the Government asks for all departments and agencies to prepare an annual business plan which describes the departments and agencies' priorities for the next fiscal year. In keeping with this commitment, the Department of Education is proud to present its business plan for 2003-04.

This Department faces many challenges as it works to meet the needs of its clients and stakeholders. Some of these challenges are presented in our Department's plan, *Learning for Life: Planning for Student Success*. To aid in our continuous efforts to improve the quality of education in Nova Scotia, *Learning for Life* sets forth a plan for addressing the fundamental needs of our education system including smaller class sizes in the early years, more support for students with special needs, quality teaching, and clearer testing to measure the progress of our students.

The new *Skills Nova Scotia Framework and Action Plan* outline the government's commitment to further education and training opportunities for adult Nova Scotians through partnership with business, labour, industry, communities, education and training institutions. The Department continues in its efforts to coordinate and support an effective plan to ensure Nova Scotians have the skills they need to succeed.

We also understands that a robust economy needs a strong post-secondary education system. Thanks to prudent fiscal management, we are able to make additional investments to expand the Nova Scotia Community College, to provide support for our universities, and to assist Nova Scotia students in reducing their student loan debt.

Together, these initiatives focus on building a high quality education system through our public schools, community colleges and universities, a strong workforce and a bright future. However, a fundamental part of the Government's plan is to respond to these challenges within the overall fiscal policy of the Province. We must continue to build strong foundations of quality, standards and accountability across the education and training system within this context. Priorities are proposed in this Business Plan to ensure strong governance systems are in place, resources are used wisely, results are reported, and learning is lifelong, all in order to enable Nova Scotians of all ages to be productive and prosperous participants in our society.

Original Signed by

Honourable Angus MacIsaac
Minister of Education

Original Signed by

Dennis Cochrane
Deputy Minister

2. Mission

The Department's goals, guiding principles, and strategies help to develop an environment where education and training are valued, achievement is celebrated, and learners are provided with opportunities and tools for rewarding and successful learning experiences.

Our mission is...

to provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Belief statements that underpin this mission statement reflect the Department's commitment to access to lifelong learning opportunities, full participation at all levels of the education and training system for all Nova Scotians, and accountability of all partners.

3. Planning Context

The Department has a broad mandate that spans the education and training system from pre-grade primary through to all post-secondary and adult learning destinations. These destinations include adult education, apprenticeship, community college, private career college, university, and other venues supporting human development. Other responsibilities include public libraries, immigration matters and the Youth Secretariat.

In 2002-03, the net budget of the Department was $980.2M. In addition the budget for assistance to universities is $205.8M.

The Department of Education is structured into nine operational units which are described briefly as follows.

Public Schools Branch
This branch comprises English Program Services, Student Services, Regional Education, Testing and Evaluation, African Canadian Services, Mi'kmaq Services, and Learning Resources and Technology. It is responsible for all educational programs and services for the English language public school system, testing and evaluation, educational technology and school board liaison.

Acadian and French Language Services Branch
This branch comprises French First and Second Language and ensures that the Department's mandate to provide quality education programming is met through the effective development of French first and second language programs, including resources, and student services for Acadian schools.

Higher Education Branch
This branch comprises the Universities and Colleges Liaison, the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities (NSABCU), Student Financial Assistance, Private Career Colleges, Rehabilitation Programs and Services, Teacher Certification, the Provincial Library, and the International Education Office. This branch promotes quality lifelong learning opportunities in partnership with post secondary institutions and regional public libraries.

Skills and Learning Branch
This branch comprises Adult Education, Apprenticeship Training, the Provincial Apprenticeship Board, Skill Development and Training, Labour Market Development Secretariat, and Youth Secretariat. It will also be assuming responsibility for the Forum of Labour Market Ministers' Secretariat for a term of two years as of April 2003. This branch is responsible for the policies, programs and services that facilitate the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce and promote healthy active learning communities and families.

Corporate Services Branch
This branch comprises Financial Management, Grants and Audit, Facilities Management, and Information Technology Services. It is responsible for the delivery of business and support services to the Department of Education including: the provision of facilities planning and capital projects, financial management and comptrollership responsibilities, information technology, and the delivery of data communications province-wide. This branch is also responsible for providing selected services to school boards including coordination of pupil transportation with school boards.

Corporate Policy Branch
This branch comprises Policy, Planning and Information Management, and Research and Statistics. It is responsible for providing policy, planning, research, coordination and information support services to all areas of the Department and for the coordination of immigration matters. This function is performed by compiling and developing, through research and analysis, such information as needed by the Department to address emerging issues and proposed policy or program changes.

Human Resources & Legal Services Branch
This branch comprises Human Resources and Legal Services. This branch supports activities associated with the move to single-tier collective bargaining, maximizes the value of dollars spent for legal advice, supports school boards in addressing current and emerging issues, enhances effective human resource planning in the education system, and delivers the full range of comprehensive human resource services and strategic advice necessary to support the Department's business objectives.

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Communications
The *Communications* office provides communications support for government and Department of Education programs, policies and initiatives. This includes communications planning, issues management, media relations, special events, stakeholder communications and promotion/marketing.

Education Renewal
The *Education Renewal* office provides leadership and co-ordination of education renewal initiatives that support quality, standards and accountability in public schools.

Key Challenges

The Government has identified education as one of its main priorities. Education is recognized as a lifelong endeavour with its goal being to enable learners to participate in a healthy, democratic society, and in a lifetime of meaningful work which supports a prosperous, sustainable economy.

With this goal, educational activities must focus on enabling Nova Scotians to develop their potential through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become lifelong learners. Individuals will be able to identify and solve problems; deal effectively with change; work collaboratively with others; communicate clearly, competently and confidently; and make thoughtful and responsible decisions, all necessary requirements to becoming productive members of our society.

Society also puts pressure on the education system to address social and health issues and to provide programming and services in social and life skills that were once primarily the responsibility of the family and community. These include issues such as bullying, physical inactivity, obesity, smoking and risk-taking behaviours. The education sector must try to address these societal pressures and fulfil its fundamental mandate to support lifelong learning all within the Government's fiscal commitment to achieve a balanced budget and reduce income taxes in 2003-04.

In the context of providing the best public school system to prepare learners to move on to further learning opportunities or into the labour market, there are many competing demands for program and service improvements in the English and French public school systems. These include the need to update curriculum, to improve student achievement, to address teacher professional development, and the need to implement new programs in priority areas.

The education system continues to face considerable demographic pressures in the short term planning context, particularly in rural and small schools. Because funding is based on student enrollment and enrollment is projected to continue to decline provincially, there will be increased financial pressure on the current service delivery model. School boards have also identified needs for increased funding to enable them to continue delivering high quality programs and services.

Given the financial pressures facing Government, the Department must strengthen accountability for the quality of the education provided to its learners. A key element of this accountability is to ensure that standards of quality are established, measured and reported upon. These standards enable the system to measure its achievements and may be used as a basis for making educational improvements. The communication of these standards for student learning and achievement; the results of provincial, national and international assessments; and policies pertaining to public school programs and services has increased public and parental awareness and expectations regarding the quality of educational programs and services provided in Nova Scotia's public schools.

The Department has heard from other key stakeholders through reports such as the Report of the Special Education Implementation Review Committee (SEIRC), the Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education, and the Education Consultative Forum (ECF) Sub-committee Report on Teacher Demand and Supply. These reports provide recommendations to improve our current level of programming. For example, expectations for additional funding and support for special education programs and services in the SEIRC Report. Parents want more choice and input in decision making, particularly with respect to services and supports, e.g. speech-language pathology, teacher assistants and access to tuition agreements. Further complicating this issue is an increasing tendency to use litigation to solve problems in this area drawing resources away from special education programming and services. The response to these recommendations contained within these reports must be addressed in a way that best serves the education stakeholders, fits in the current context of fiscal responsibility, and provides a public education learning environment that prepares learners to become valued and productive members of our society.

Further, as these measures highlight the need for improvement and targeted attention in different areas, the Department must shift its focus and financial resources to these areas, often creating challenges for other parts of the education system.

Another pressure in today's learning environment is technology for learners to develop their skills to succeed in the workplace and to manage their lives effectively. However, providing, supporting and refreshing technology continues to be a challenge for the education sector in such areas as improving our administrative systems and methods of delivery; providing better access to educational programming like distance education; and ensuring that our young people are

prepared to function and compete in a world where technology and communications are so important. The availability and integration of relevant technology is critical to enable the Department to achieve its goals.

Another well recognized challenge in the education system is the maintenance and building of school facilities. The public education system consists of over 450 school buildings of differing ages and conditions. These facilities require continuous maintenance to ensure a safe adequate learning environment and uninterrupted service delivery. The Department has taken an aggressive approach to maximize the value of its facilities and extend their useful life span but this continues to be a challenge. Universities and community colleges also face similar challenges in ensuring the integrity and usefulness of their capital facilities.

There are also a number of challenges for the Department in developing a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. The aging population, impact of technology on work, development and retention of skilled workers, increasing education requirements for employment, and rising costs of education require new partnerships and creative approaches to skill development.

For example, the aging population and need for more skilled workers has led to increasing enrollments in adult learning programs and in Nova Scotia's Apprenticeship Program. As more adults recognize the need for and benefits of lifelong learning, the Department is being challenged to respond effectively to the increasing demands for comprehensive and accessible adult learning programs. It is also imperative that the Department provide opportunities for youth to develop the skills that will enable them to make a successful transition to adulthood and into today's labour market.

One of the critical and emergent issues in higher education is determining who benefits from education and training, and what portion of these costs should be borne by individuals, their families, tax payers and the private sector. This challenge becomes more acute when the creation and expansion of a highly educated workforce and citizenry takes place in a context where student debt loads are among the highest in Canada.

Research and innovation is a key component of building the capacity of Nova Scotia's innovation systems and more and more, the outcomes of university and college research programs will lead to improved business opportunities, productivity, and innovative performance throughout the province. In partnership with the Office of Economic Development and the Department of Finance, this Department must further assist the universities and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) in obtaining sufficient, matching funds for all nationally funded research grants and competitions.

In summary, the key challenges of the education sector must be addressed within the overall fiscal policy of the Province. We must continue to build strong foundations of quality, standards and accountability across the education and training system within this context.

4. Goals of the Department

The Government of Nova Scotia has adopted three main priorities for public policy initiatives that must be addressed within the context of fiscal sustainability and a balanced budget. These priorities provide a framework for departmental activities and are as follows:

1. Health Care - stabilize funding and improve service availability and quality
2. Education - improve the quality of education and the learning environment
3. Economy, Jobs and Growth - take advantage of economic opportunities to maximize jobs and growth.

The Department of Education's goals for 2003-04, are focused on fulfilling the government priorities and fall within these seven main goals:

- to improve conditions for learning in the public education system
- to strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas
- to enable the provision of relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training
- to promote healthy, active learning communities and families
- to foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training
- to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce
- to strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results.

5. Core Business Areas and Functions

The mandate of the Department of Education spans the public school system, community colleges, universities, private career colleges, a comprehensive system of adult learning, apprenticeship, public libraries, and other programs and services to support lifelong learning. The core business functions of the Department can be defined under five key business areas: Primary-12 education, higher education, skills and learning, corporate policy and corporate administrative services. As set out in the guidelines from Treasury and Policy Board, the core business areas do not include the internal support functions of finance, information technology and human resource management.

1. Primary-12 Education

The Primary-12 Education Core Business Area encompasses the Public Schools and Acadian and French Language Services Branches. These branches co-ordinate the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of programs, courses, services, and related policies and resources for the public school system and correspondence studies. These include English and French first-language and second language programs; provincial, national, and international assessments of student achievement; special education; comprehensive guidance and counselling; multicultural education; support services for the educational achievement of Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotians; the evaluation and provision of print and technological learning resources; professional development for administrators and teachers; and the provision of advice to school boards in educational and operational matters.

The core functions of the core business area, Primary-12 Education, are as follows:

- identifies priorities, coordinates the development, and evaluates implementation of public school programs, policies, educational services, and related priorities
- provides direction and advice to school boards on all matters pertaining to public education
- coordinates the development and implementation of specialized educational programming and services to support Acadian, African Nova Scotian, Mi'kmaq students and students enrolled in French- and English-second-language programs
- coordinates the development and implementation of services for students with special needs and other student support services
- evaluates resources to be included in *Authorized Learning Resources* and provides technology services to support the curriculum
- coordinates school improvement planning and accreditation programs
- coordinates provincial, national, and international assessments and publishes an annual *Minister's Report to Parents* on the results
- plans and conducts in-service teacher education and summer institutes, and assists school boards in developing and providing professional development programs
- negotiates and administers federal assistance programs provided under Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) for French First and Second Language Programs
- provides consultative and advisory services to other education partners such as universities, colleges, other departments and agencies, professional associations and organizations, advocacy groups, the media, and the general public regarding public school policies, programs, and educational services and engages in interdepartmental initiatives.

2. Higher Education

The Higher Education Core Business Area encompasses the Higher Education Branch. This branch contributes to the Department of Education's lifelong learning mandate by providing funding and services to post-secondary institutions and libraries to: maintain and enhance accessibility to post-secondary education; promote formal and informal learning opportunities; and support teacher training, professional development and certification.

Further, the Higher Education Branch monitors the provision of sufficient highly qualified personnel, in partnership with the post-secondary education institutions, to meet the emergent labour market demand and the need for a knowledgeable, engaged citizenry.

The core functions of the core business area, higher education, are as follows:

- advises the Minister on all matters relating to universities, Nova Scotia Community College and Université Sainte-Anne/Collège de l'Acadie
- provides funding and supports universities, community colleges and regional public libraries
- leads or participates in federal-provincial and inter-provincial negotiations related to post-secondary education
- advises the Minister on matters relating to training at private career colleges and develops related policy
- provides a range of accessibility-related programs, goods and services to adult Nova Scotians with disabilities in post-secondary training and employment
- provides teacher certification and classification functions, recognizes and maintains teaching service records
- assists the post-secondary education institutions to meet emergent needs of the labour market
- develops student loan policy, manages loan portfolio and administers the Canada and Nova Scotia student loan programs
- coordinates regional public library services and promotes library cooperation at national, regional and provincial levels.

3. Skills and Learning

The Skills and Learning Core Business Area encompasses the Skills and Learning Branch. This branch designs and implements policies, programs and services that support the development of a world class workforce and a culture of lifelong learning. The branch is the co-ordinating lead for the *Skills Nova Scotia Framework*, Action Plan and Report on Skills. Programs and services carried out through the branch include apprenticeship training, adult education opportunities in the community and the workplace, targeted skills initiatives and initiatives targeted at youth.

The core functions of the core business area, skills and learning, are as follows:

- co-ordinates and supports the implementation of the province's *Skills Nova Scotia Framework*, Action Plan and Report on Skills
- co-ordinates federal-provincial relations related to the labour market development
- advises the Minister on all matters related to skill development
- creates labour market policy and undertakes labour market research including the collection, analysis, and dissemination of labour market information
- oversees the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and administers the General Education Development (GED) testing service and the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults
- coordinates educational programs and services in the areas of community-based literacy, family literacy and workplace essential skill development
- supports workforce adjustment and attachment initiatives
- sets and monitors the standards for adult education, apprenticeship training, and essential skills programming
- administers the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Training Program and the Provincial Apprenticeship Board
- offers programming and support for ESL for adults to promote immigrant attachment to the labour market
- works across departments to advise government on the issues impacting on the lives of young Nova Scotians in their transition to adulthood and provides information services to youth and youth serving organizations.

4. Corporate Policy

The Corporate Policy Core Business Area encompasses the Corporate Policy Branch. This branch is responsible for providing policy, planning, research, coordination and information support services to all areas of the Department. This responsibility is performed by compiling and developing, through research and analysis, such information as needed by the Department to address emerging issues and proposed policy or program changes.

The core functions of the core business area, corporate policy, are as follows:

- coordinates the development, communication, and evaluation of policy for all departmental jurisdictions
- undertakes strategic and business planning for the Department
- supports a strategic focus on corporate departmental issues (e.g. legislative and policy matters)
- undertakes focused research to address current and emerging issues across all sections of the Department
- develops and maintains a comprehensive management information system and statistical service relating to public education matters
- coordinates interprovincial and intergovernmental relations in matters relating to the responsibilities of the Department
- coordinates provincial immigration matters and federal-provincial activity related to immigration
- provides access to information and supports the implementation of records management for the Department
- manages departmental information resources and library services, and print and electronic publishing initiatives.

5. Corporate Administrative Services

The Corporate Administrative Services Core Business Area encompasses the Corporate Services and Human Resources & Legal Services Branches which provide a range of services to school boards, community colleges, public libraries, and other related organizations, to assist the Department in meeting its mandate. These services are in the key areas of financial management and control, facilities and transportation management, distribution of learning resources and related products, information technology management and support, human resources management and planning, and legal services.

The core functions of the core business area, corporate administrative services, are as follows:

- provides comptrollership functions and administers provincial grants to school boards, community colleges, universities, community-based learning organizations and public libraries
- undertakes grant-recipient audits, facilities planning, and equipment acquisition
- establishes accountability and financial guidelines for school boards and monitors school board financial performance
- manages the Province's school capital program, including the construction of new schools, major alterations and additions to existing schools; and the Province's school indoor air quality program
- monitors school boards' student transportation systems
- operates the school book bureau
- provides coordinated wide area network (EDnet) communications and services to schools, school boards, community colleges and libraries for administrative systems and access to the Internet by students, teachers and the public
- promotes and supports the use of information technology throughout the education and training system
- provides human resources and legal services to school boards on matters of provincial scope to build expertise and consistency across the public school system in dealing with common issues (collective bargaining, grievance handling, human resource planning, administration and accountability structures).

6. Priorities for 2003-04 by Core Business Area

To meet the business planning guidelines, the Department's priorities are organized according to the lead core business area of the Department with the supporting or partnering core business areas noted in brackets at the end of each priority. To assist the reader, the priorities under the Primary-12 Education system have been sub-categorized by departmental goal.

Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education

P-12 Priorities related to the goal of *improving the conditions for learning*:
With the goal to improve conditions for learning, the Department has developed a Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS). PLANS will continue to provide reliable information on student achievement in specific curriculum areas. Assessments scheduled to be administered are: the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA)(15-year old students), Elementary Mathematics Program Assessment (grade 5 students in English programs and French immersion programs), Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 6 students), Nova Scotia Examinations in English 12, English/Communications 12, Mathematics 12/Mathématiques 12, Advanced Mathematics 12/Mathématiques avancée12, Calcul différential et intégral 12, Chemistry 12 (English and French immersion) and Physics 12. As well, other assessments will be developed for administration, namely the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) in Science (13- and 16-year old students), and a Junior High Mathematics Program Assessment (grade 8).

A French Language Skills Assessment for grade 9 French immersion students will be developed for administration in 2004-05.

The Department will work with school boards on implementation of the *Time to Learn Strategy*. The Department will monitor and collect data on the implementation of guidelines for instructional time, of which grades primary-6 guidelines were introduced in September 2002. These guidelines include minimum requirements for mathematics, Core French, and language arts. The Department will introduce new guidelines for instructional time, grades 7–9, including minimum time requirements for mathematics, Core French, and language arts. The Department will pilot new models for the delivery of Core French in the elementary and junior high program including innovative ways to use instructional time.

The *Information Economy Initiative* (IEI) supports teaching and learning through the use of technology, with the current focus on grades 4-6. This initiative includes the provision of computers, software, professional development, and technical support. It is expected that more than 900 computers and software will be added to grades 4-6 in 2003-04. Funding will also be allocated to school boards to provide professional development and technical support. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will continue to coordinate SchoolNet Grassroots initiatives for the development of on-line learning activities for students and to refurbish computers for schools through the federal-provincial Computers for Schools initiative (Technology Recycling Program). For Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) schools, these last two initiatives are coordinated at the school board level. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will continue with the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which covers all school members. Implementation will include professional development and the development of *Code of Conduct Guidelines* including discipline tracking and reporting; a policy on formal reference checks for all staff and volunteers; and a complaints resolution process. Implementation of this initiative will continue with the introduction of a handbook on positive behavioral implementation strategies developed through the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF) and four research pilots across the province.

Four pilots identified to work with the Department on meeting the needs of diverse learners in high schools will be undertaken. *Increasing Learning Success* will be used to guide this process. The Department will continue the school accreditation pilot introduced in September 2002. School improvement plans and the process involved in their development by the eight schools involved in the pilot will be reviewed by external teams. These pilot schools will implement approved improvement plans in the 2003-04 school year. After demonstrating progress in meeting identified goals and targets for school improvement, the schools will be accredited.

Literacy continues to be a priority. The Department will continue the development of *Let's Talk about ...* pamphlets to inform parents about the instructional program and ways they can support students' literacy development. The Department will continue to work collaboratively with university partners on initiatives designed to strengthen pre-service and in-service teacher education in literacy.

Funding will be targeted for the enhancement of resource teachers, student services professionals and Reading Recovery™ ratios with school boards. School boards will be encouraged to submit proposals to bridge the gaps that exist between the number of core professional service providers; such as resource teachers, school psychologists and speech-language pathologists currently employed by school boards, and recommended professional service ratios. Additional funding will provide, over a three-year period, 135 additional professional staff positions. It is the goal of the Department of Education to achieve full implementation of Reading Recovery™ by having the program available to all grade one students who require it. Normalisation of the *Observation Survey* with French immersion students and related professional development will be undertaken in order to provide French immersion students access to the Reading Recovery™ program.

The *Writers in Action* initiative, introduced in grade 4 in 2002-03 will be expanded to grade 5. This initiative is designed to increase emphasis on grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation and ensure that students have access to structured, sequential language instruction. *Writers in Action* includes the provision of a student handbook for all grade 4 students; additional learning

resources for classroom writing centres; teaching materials; and professional development programs. Spelling will be a particular focus in 2003-04; the Department will implement *Spelling: A Teaching Resource* for grades primary–8 teachers and provide additional learning and professional resources to support this component of the instructional program.

A literacy strategy will be developed for Acadian students beginning at the grade 4 level and extending to grade 7. This initiative, *Écrivains à l'oeuvre*, has been broadened to include grammar punctuation and spelling strategies. The Department will identify appropriate resource materials for teachers and students, and will provide professional development through a summer institute.

The Department's *Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs* initiative will continue to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary–6. The Department will implement the *Active Young Readers Grades 4–6 Reading Assessment Resource* to assist classroom teachers in assessing students' reading development, strengths, and learning needs. Professional development of teacher leaders in grades 4–6 will be continue with a focus on the use of information and communication technologies to support literacy development.

The Department will continue to support the *Jeunes lecteurs actifs* and *Écrivains à l'oeuvre* initiatives for French immersion students in grades 4 to 6 and *Jeunes lecteurs actifs* and *Écrivains à l'oeuvre* initiatives for grades 4 to 6 in all Acadian schools by providing learning resources for students, leadership training and support documents for school board teams and teaching staff, summer institutes and other professional development activities.

The junior high literacy initiative, *Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs,* will expand to provide increased support for grade 8 students in English and French immersion programs and continue to be offered for grades 7 to 9 in all Acadian schools. The focus at this level will be on high quality literacy instruction across the curriculum for all learners and effective interventions for those students having literacy difficulties. It will include learning resources for students, leadership training and support documents for school board teams, summer institutes and other professional development activities for Anglophone and Francophone teachers.

The Department will continue to work within the APEF on projects for French second language projects and Acadian schools. Activities will include the development of a literacy assessment resource for grade 4-6 French immersion students, support documents for French second language teachers, resources to support grades 2 to 8 French curriculum, the French language arts program offered in grades 9 to 12 in Acadian schools, and the analysis of a regional survey administered to grade 11 students no longer taking core French.

The Department will administer the Elementary Literacy Assessment in October 2003 to determine the reading and writing skills of grade 6 Anglophone and Francophone students. Parents will receive a report on their child's achievement. Students who do not meet an acceptable level of achievement will be given support.

LiteracyLinks resources will be developed to assist content area teachers in English and French immersion programs in strengthening students' literacy development.

The Department is working with the other Atlantic Provinces through APEF to improve student achievement in the PISA. Nova Scotia is the lead province in developing a mathematics sampler that will be distributed to teachers in the region to help them to prepare their students for the next PISA administration in the spring of 2003. An information pamphlet for the public will be published. As well, a provincial profile of Nova Scotia results will be produced as part of a research project. Over 40 countries participate in this international assessment.

The Department will distribute guidelines for English as a Second Language (ESL). A guide for classroom and ESL teachers, which is in development, focuses on practical and effective teaching practices. The Department has developed a language proficiency diagnostic assessment tool to support program planning for ESL students.

The Department will be negotiating with Canadian Heritage for supplementary funding under OLEP. The Department has several initiatives to propose including the development of a comprehensive consultation of Acadian stakeholders related to senior high curriculum, a pilot project of arts in Acadian schools, an instrument to assess the language skills of grade 9 French immersion students, pilot projects for elementary French course and Core French distance courses. A submission for funding has been made.

The Department will conduct Positive Parenting Workshops for parents of African Canadian students. These workshops will be designed to increase parents' knowledge of the school system and related policies, procedures, rights, and responsibilities; improve parenting skills that support children in achieving school success; ways to access resources beyond the school and ways to recognize and address the changing needs of their children.

The Department will begin implementation of the multi-year plan developed in response to the Report of the Special Education Implementation Review Committee (SEIRC). The plan addresses initiatives and activities from 2002-03 to 2005-06. In responding to the government's promise to introduce a multi-year plan to increase support for students with special needs, additional funding has been identified in *Learning for Life: Planning for Student Success* from 2003-2006.

In 2003-04, a communication plan to improve the understanding of inclusive schooling and programming for students with special needs will be developed in consultation with the Student Services Coordinators of school boards. One component of the plan will be the development of a series of information brochures addressing: inclusion, the appeal process, identification and assessment, and transition planning. A template will be developed for writing appeal decisions, and a guide for parents on program planning will be developed.

The Provincial Transition Committee involving the Departments of Community Services and Education, and school board representatives is being re-established under the auspices of the Children and Youth Action Committee (CAYAC) to address transition issues for students with special needs.

The Transition Planning Handbook has been revised with an emphasis on transitioning at all stages rather than just transition to work and community. The Handbook will be implemented in the 2003-04 school year.

A video on school-wide enrichment as a professional development support for teachers, administrators and for information sessions for parents has been completed. Implementation will begin in Spring 2003.

Support for professional development activities will continue in the provision of summer institute opportunities for teachers. A summer institute(s) for school board office/school administrators/student services personnel in Mediation Skills Training will be held this summer. A summer institute for new and aspiring school administrators will be held on administrative practices that enhance meeting the needs of diverse learners.

The Department will enhance learning and professional resources by implementing a guide on resource teaching and by reviewing the *Authorized Learning Resources* List with working groups from school boards and the Department in order to identify resources for annotation that meet diverse students needs. Funding will be targeted for direct provision of additional learning resources.

Pilot projects will enable school boards to enhance the continuum of services available to students with special needs. Boards will be invited to apply for designated funding through submission of project proposals. Through an evaluation process, the Department will identify and report on successful practices.

P-12 Priorities related to the goal of *strengthening educational programming and services in priority areas*:

At the senior high level, the Department will introduce 220-hour course options for grade 10 mathematics (English programs) and will pilot a 220-hour course option for English language arts. The Department will continue to work with boards toward consistency in semestering practices for 2004–05. To allow more students to continue Core French at the high school level, the Department will develop and pilot a grade 12 Core French course offered via distance education.

The implementation of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy will continue in 2003-04. The Department will work with school boards and industry partners to conduct Nova Scotia

Youth Apprenticeship Program pilots. The Department will implement three new courses: Business Management 12, Food Science 12, and Agriculture/Agrifood 11. The Department will continue development and piloting of interactive technology course options linked to labour market opportunities, including Multimedia 12, Geomatics 12, and Computer Studies 12.

The Department will expand career-related course offerings with the development of a new family studies course, Community Care 12 and the development of Tourism 12 to build upon the highly successful course Tourism 11. These courses will be developed to articulate with post-secondary studies (Community Care 12 with the (NSCC) health and human services programs, and Tourism12 with Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) Tourism Studies and the NSCC Tourism and Hospitality program).

The Department will continue to develop, support, and promote articulation agreements with the NSCC for Cultural Industries 11, Multimedia 12, Geomatics 12, Business Management 12, Entrepreneurship 12, Agriculture/Agrifood 11, Film and Video Production 12, Electrotechnologies 11, and Design 11.

The Department will begin development of a series of publications to illustrate pathways from grade 7, through high school and post secondary education and training to employment in a range of occupations. These publications will include a handbook for guidance counsellors and career practitioners, a series of brochures for students and parents, and a series of posters for classrooms. The Department will also develop student and teacher resources to connect secondary curricula to career options.

As part of the implementation of new Health/Personal Development and Relationships for grade 7, the Department will introduce the Nova Scotia Student Career Portfolio to 12,000 students.

At the senior high level, the Department will develop an English 10 Plus course to address the needs of students requiring additional support in literacy development. In addition, the Department will work with school boards to pilot other initiatives that provide increased time and support for literacy. Two teaching resources, *English 10: A Teaching Resource* and *Writers in Action 10* will be developed for implementation in 2004-05.

Implementation of Français pré-emploi at all senior high levels will also benefit Acadian students who are struggling with some areas of language arts.

Mathematics continues to be a priority area. The Department will continue to support school boards and their schools in implementing *Mathematics Strategy* initiatives. Professional development for school-based math leaders, grades primary–9, will continue, and workshops will be provided for principals as well to assist them in leading implementation of the mathematics program at the site level. Ten grade level teaching guides: *Mathematics: A Teaching Resource* will be completed and implemented.

The Department will develop two *CurriculumLinks* resources for teachers in English and French immersion programs: *MathLinks Grades Primary–3* and *MathLinks Grades 4–6*. These will assist teachers in connecting mathematics learning to other program areas; classroom resources will be provided to support literacy-numeracy links in grades primary–2.

The Department will begin the process of implementing new learning resources for elementary mathematics. A number of resources will be developed and provided to strengthen links between the math class and home. These will include four pamphlets for parents, "Homework Baggies" for grades primary–3, and other communication tools to assist teachers in working with parents to support student learning in mathematics.

The Department will continue the adaptation and translation of the grades P-3 and grades 9 and 10 Atlantic Canada mathematics curriculum documents for teachers in French immersion programs. Related professional development activities will be undertaken.

The Department will continue to evaluate the elementary and junior high mathematics programs and provide student achievement information for the purpose of improving program implementation. Junior high mathematics teachers will receive a comprehensive report of what was learned from the junior high mathematics program assessment. The report, *Toward a Coherent Mathematics Program: Junior High* will be a companion to the elementary mathematics program assessment report *Toward a Coherent Mathematics Program: Elementary* distributed last year to elementary mathematics teachers. The junior high report will provide suggestion for teachers to assist their students in learning mathematics.

At the senior high level, the Department will support English school boards in implementing Mathematics 10 Plus and Mathematics Foundations 10 Plus. The Department will develop supplementary teaching resources for Mathematics 10 and Mathematics Foundations 10 courses. In addition, the Department will work with boards to pilot other initiatives that provide increased time and support for mathematics learning, including the development of a Mathematics Essentials 10 course.

Acadian schools will benefit from a new curriculum for all Mathématiques courses and the introduction of Mathématiques pré-emploi at all senior high levels. Mathématiques pré-calcul12 will also be introduced in September 2003.

The Department will continue the development of a data bank (hard copy and on-line) of mathematics questions to assist teachers of grades 11 and 12 in designing tests, quizzes and assignments. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will implement Nova Scotia Examinations in mathematics for Anglophone, Francophone and French immersion students. The examinations will count for 30% of students'

final course marks. The Department will publish a *Mathematics Item Writer's Guide* to involve teachers in the examination process allowing them to contribute to the computerized bank of mathematics questions. All grade 12 mathematics teachers will participate in a full day examination inservice and each will receive a *Nova Scotia Examinations Mathematics 12/Advanced Mathematics 12 Teacher Information Guide* outlining the examinations and giving sample questions.

The Department will continue to support the implementation of the Atlantic Canada science curriculum grades primary and 1 for English and French immersion programs. New curriculum and resources will be introduced for grade 2 science. The Department will assist school boards through the provision of a leadership workshop, a summer institute, teaching resources, and the tools young learners need for hands-on, minds-on science experiences. The Department will implement *ScienceLinks Primary–2: A Teaching Resource* to assist teachers in connecting science learning to literacy, mathematics, and other program areas.

LiteracyLinks: Science 7 will be developed to support implementation of *Active Readers 7* and assist teachers in strengthening the writing component of the grade 7 science curriculum. A professional development workshop will be conducted for teacher leaders of science, grades 9 and 10. To strengthen implementation of Atlantic Canada Physics Curriculum, new textbooks and CD teacher resources will be provided for grade 11 physics. *Physics 11 and Physics 12: A Teaching Resource* will be implemented. In addition, the Department will work with university partners to develop a curriculum document for *Advanced Physics 11 and Advanced Physics 12* to set standards curriculum delivery and student learning in advanced level courses.

The Department will implement *African Heritage Literature 12,* a new elective course which will include the provision of professional development and learning resources. The Department will continue to support the implementation of African Canadian History 11, Gaelic Studies 11, and Mi'kmaq Studies 10. The Department will implement Mi'kmaw Language 7 and will continue to develop curriculum and resources for Mi'kmaw language courses at the junior high level.

The Department will develop new courses for Correspondence Study: Math 9, Art 10, Science 10, Mi'Kmaq Studies 11, Math Foundations 11, Biology 11, Communications Technology 11, Chemistry 11 & 12, Child Studies 11.

P-12 Priorities related to the goal of *promoting healthy, active learning communities and families:*

The Department's Active Healthy Schools strategy will include assistance to school boards in the implementation of *Health Education: Grades 4-6* and *Health/Personal Development and Relationships: Grade 7.* This assistance will include the provision of addictions (smoking, substance abuse) prevention and anti-bullying resources. The Department will continue to work with partners to support *Active School Communities* pilots in each school board.
The Department will continue the development of new high school physical education courses.

P-12 Priorities related to the goal of *fostering access, equity and diversity*:
The Department will assist school boards in increasing the provision of student support workers' services to African Nova Scotian students and other students who require support and will develop operational guidelines for student support workers. The Department will continue to provide professional development and related resources to assist school boards in enhancing race relations, cross-cultural communication, and human rights education.

The *Racial Equity Policy* will begin to be implemented in 2003-04. This policy outlines the Department's commitment to promoting equity in our public school system. The policy supports the work done by school boards to develop their own racial equity policies and provides an overall provincial framework to ensure consistency.

The Department will continue to work toward the establishment of an Africentric Learning Institute.

The Department will continue to work toward the implementation of key recommendations of the *BLAC Report on Education*.

P-12 Priorities related to the goal of *strengthening accountability*
The Department is committed to providing parents with regular, clear information on their children's progress. The Department will continue to pilot the new standard report cards and will conduct a consultation in April 2003 with pilot schools, parents, and other partners to evaluate the new report cards and reporting system. The Department will work with boards on the use of technology in producing report cards. The process of implementing new report cards and reporting policy will begin in 2003–04.

The Department will develop a new interactive website for parents that will include plain-language information on what students are learning and how students are doing in our schools.

The Department will work to enhance monitoring and reporting student progress and achievement by working with school boards to identify appropriate monitoring and review mechanisms regarding Individual Program Plans (IPPs), and a section for reporting on outcomes of IPPs in the new Provincial Report Card will be implemented.

The Department will develop and implement a framework for the decision making process regarding the acquisition, distribution and provision of a range of assistive technology devices and services for Primary-12.

The Department will develop a discussion paper concerning the role and responsibilities of School Advisory Councils (SAC) and ways to make these more meaningful. Professional development for SACs will be included as an area for discussion. This paper will be circulated to SACs and school boards.

Core Business Area: Higher Education

The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities (NSABCU) will consider issues including: quality assurance, accountability and the role and capacity of the post-secondary education institutions. The Advisory Board will also consult with post-secondary institutions on issues such as the need to define institutional and system-wide mission statements, greater articulation between the community college and university systems, and institutional and system planning to respond to the need for health care professionals.

The first five year review (1996-2001) of Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), as mandated by the *Community Colleges Act,* has resulted in the identification of specific measures of accountability that will be used for the next five year review (2006). The NSABCU further expects that these same measures may be applied to future reviews of other post-secondary institutions.

The merger of Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie, and their five year business plan, will form the basis of this Department's provision of high quality, accessible post secondary education in French.

The Department will implement a new student debt reduction program and consult on a new policy for designating educational institutions, to ensure the sustainability of government-sponsored student loans for future post-secondary students.

The Department will re-engineer the student assistance production system which will enable increased reporting, better use of resources through automation and the development of an extensive audit process. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

In 2003-04 the Department will continue to monitor the General Regulations made pursuant to the *Private Career Colleges Regulation Act* to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the private career college sector and that consumer protection remains a priority.

The Department will continue to work with the NSCC on their Development Initiative which would expand enrollments at NSCC. This initiative outlines infrastructure improvements to rural campuses enabling an increase in 1500 seats and the replacement of a Metro campus, thereby increasing capacity by 1000 seats.

The Department will provide additional funding assistance to universities in 2002/03 with the expectation that tuition fee increases will be mitigated for 2003-04.

Research and innovation will be actively enhanced in universities and the NSCC by continuing to provide matching funding for national research grants.

The Department will continue to review teacher certification requirements and standards both within the Atlantic Provinces and across Canada, with a view to achieving increased mobility into Nova Scotia for teachers in targeted areas.

The Department will work with the NSCC (and Collège de l'Acadie) and the universities in the development of a special needs policy embracing common principles for students with disabilities participating in post-secondary training, and ensure that each College and university campus has assistive technology workstations provided for students with disabilities.

The recommended expansion of the community college enrollments will enable NSCC to double the number of IPP students attending the College and enhance enrollments in trades and technology and other areas of strategic importance. In addition, the Department, through its Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) programs, will expand its Transition to Employment program (in the summer) for graduating students with disabilities.

The Department will track eligible students with disabilities and their retention and graduation rates from the NSCC and universities, as well as their success rates in transitioning to employment. (In conjunction with Skills and Learning)

The Department will continue to assist the public library system in providing the best possible service to meet the information needs of Nova Scotians by conducting a review of the funding formula for the public library systems with specific reference to critical mass and the counter-pull of demography. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

Core Business Area: Skills and Learning

The Department will coordinate and contribute to a variety of initiatives aimed at developing a skilled and adaptable workforce and promoting healthy, active learning communities and families.

As lead department for skills, the Department of Education will work with other provincial departments and agencies to develop a 2003/04 Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan and create a Partners' Advisory Forum to advise government on the broad issues and opportunities within Nova Scotia's labour market. The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia (through Education as lead) will work together to ensure that the Labour Market Development Agreement advances the joint skill priorities under the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Innovation Framework

(Apprenticeship, Learning and Earning; Employability; Immigration; and Labour Market Information.).

The Department will take on the responsibilities of the Forum of Labour Market Ministers Secretariat (FLMM) for a period of two years beginning in April 2003. The Secretariat facilitates inter-jurisdictional discussion and cooperation between the Federal and Provincial/Territorial Governments on labour market issues.

The Department will work with partners to develop labour market information products and services that inform the skill development and labour market decisions of individuals, business and labour, policy makers and education providers.

The Department will create funding mechanisms to support strategic investment and action through targeted initiatives, and conclude a Memorandum of Understanding with the Association of Industry Sector Councils to undertake joint planning around skill development initiatives.

The Department will collaborate with the Office of Economic Development (lead) to implement the new Provincial Nominee Agreement to assist in meeting the labour market skill needs of Nova Scotia.

The Department will initiate a service mapping project which will inventory current career development and employment services provided to Nova Scotians, identify gaps in service, and provide the foundation for a comprehensive career and employment strategy.

Under the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL), the Department will continue, through partnerships, to administer and coordinate a system of programs for adults seeking to improve their literacy and essential skills, and/or obtain the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults. Priority will be given to the piloting of a student information system, and implementation of guidelines and procedures for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) component of the diploma. In addition, distance education will be explored as an alternative delivery method to facilitate access to the diploma for adults.

The curriculum development process will include review, evaluation and enhancement of the existing Adult Learning Program courses and the *Formation générale des adultes*, as well as formalizing curriculum links to employability. Through its seven Regional Planning Teams and the Francophone Advisory Committee, the Department will continue to work closely with NSCC, Université Sainte-Anne/Collège de l'Acadie, school boards, community-based learning organizations, Human Resource Development Canada, and Community Services. These teams will coordinate communication and outreach projects to implement referral protocols and provide professional development opportunities to service providers, funding agencies and career and

employment counseling agencies, ensuring that adult learners are appropriately served, referred and counseled.

Priorities for the Community Learning Initiative (CLI) this year include the implementation of a provincial service agreement, and the development of strategies to facilitate learner transitions. Particular emphasis will be placed on partnering with the community-based sector to develop strategies to link community programs to employability and essential skills issues.

The Department will work with the Department of Justice and other organizations to support the Justice Reintegration Project. This project is seeking to enhance educational options for adults incarcerated or in conflict with the law, by developing improved assessment and referral tools and tutor training.

The Department will support pilot projects funded under the Older Workers Pilot Project Initiative and create a toolkit and professional development for practitioners to help workers 55 and older improve their skills and find employment.

Under the Workplace Education and Workforce Adjustment/Attachment Initiatives, the Department will expand the Essential Skills for Small Business program, particularly for the African-Nova Scotian community; continue to support the Devco Career Opportunity Centre and the Sysco Job Transition Centre to assist displaced workers; implement Phase II of the Apprenticeship Essential Skills Initiative; and finalize a partnership with the Department of Community Services to support labour market attachment/essential skills programs for income assistance recipients.

In response to business and labour needs, the Department will significantly enhance provision of apprenticeship training and client service over the next five years. To achieve this, training will be provided for 45% of active apprentices in 2003/04. In addition, the Division will develop a strategy to achieve a ratio of 250 apprentices for each Industrial Training and Certification Officer.

Other initiatives will include: continuing to work with Atlantic partners (Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island) in the development and production of common trade standards; continuing cooperation with interprovincial partners on Canada-wide development of occupational analyses and examinations; implementing an essential skills assessment process and developing Individualized Learning Plans for all new apprentices by the end of 2004/05; extending activity in the recognition of prior learning; and initiating the development and implementation of course-ending examinations for all apprenticeship programs (by the end of the five year period).

The Department will actively promote careers in skilled trades and engage in strategic partnerships leading to a vibrant Apprenticeship Program by establishing a youth apprenticeship program by the end of 2003/2004, and engaging partners in coordinating promotional/awareness campaigns.

The Department will work though the *Apprenticeship - Achieving Excellence Through Partnership* recommendations with business, labour, and training provider partners.

The Department will conduct a second Youth Decision Survey to determine the level of knowledge about skilled trade careers among our youth and to assess progress since the 2000 survey.

The Department will revise the *Youth Secretariat Act* to strengthen the mandate of the Secretariat to work across departmental boundaries, maximize benefits of available resources, and achieve more beneficial outcomes for Nova Scotia's youth.

The Department will achieve meaningful dialogue with Nova Scotia's youth through supporting the work of the Youth Advisory Council and the Provincial Student Education Council to create a strong and effective voice for youth and to inform better policy decisions surrounding youth issues and issues affecting youth.

The Department will coordinate the Provincial Employment Program to ensure efficient and effective delivery of the NS Employment Program for Students and the Co-operative Employment Program.

The Department will pursue a partnership with Heart Wood, a charitable organization that focuses on youth and mentor volunteers, to create and support the "Centre for Youth Engagement".

The Department will facilitate innovative partnerships such as the one with the Halifax Youth Foundation to encourage family involvement in learning. It will work with the Colchester East Hants Library and a Provincial Advisory Committee to develop an action plan for family literacy and continue to explore the development of good practice guidelines to shape the creation of quality programs.

The Department will work with hospital and community partners to advance Phase II of the infant gift-book program, *Read to Me!*, which supports learning development in our youngest citizens.

Core Business Area: Corporate Policy

In response to the *Education Consultative Forum (ECF) Sub-Committee Report on Teacher Supply and Demand,* an Early Hiring Job Fair was held in January and February 2003 involving the Department, all Nova Scotia school boards, the Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA), and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU). This was undertaken to address current and potential teacher shortages in certain subject areas. An evaluation will be conducted to determine the success of the initiative in supporting school boards in addressing their labour market needs.

Also in response to projected shortages in the supply of teachers, A survey of substitute teachers and recent graduates is being undertaken to examine issues and concerns related to substituting in Nova Scotia. Survey results will be available early in the Spring of 2003.

The Department will continue discussions with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to finalize negotiations on a new Framework Agreement. This Agreement will more clearly define roles and responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, facilitate closer collaboration in the development of immigration policies appropriate to the province's needs, and will support joint planning efforts to meet immigrant settlement needs in Nova Scotia.

The Department will be working with the Metropolitan Immigration Settlement Association (MISA) to undertake a feasibility study to assess the need for a credential recognition service to support immigrants' access to the labour market and post-secondary education system. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Skills and Learning)

Over the next year, the Department will develop an Elementary Literacy Assessment Database to assist with the administration and tracking of the Grade 6 literacy testing. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

The Department will continue to enhance current information systems, system integration, data collection processes and statistical services supporting the Nova Scotia public school information needs of the Department and other educational stakeholders.

Core Business Area: Corporate Administrative Services

The Department will fulfill its mandate of identifying school capital needs through the continual operation of the School Capital Construction Committee, which will report to government on prioritization of capital funding needs for Nova Scotia schools. The Department will continue the delivery of school capital projects approved in July 2000, scheduled for delivery by 2005. Three additional schools were approved for construction in 2001-02, bringing the total to 19.

Seven of the schools were completed in 2001-02. In 2002-03, an additional two schools were completed, and another six are under construction. Five new school construction projects are now in process with an additional four to start in fiscal year 2003/04. The school capital program is under review and an announcement of additional new school construction and addition/ alteration projects is anticipated early in the 2003/04 fiscal year.

There will continue to be an addition and alteration program that will enhance and/or replace major school building components on a priority basis. The Department will work with school boards and other provincial departments to identify and resolve environmental problems. Eight schools are now being added to and altered under a phased multi-year program to address building condition, environmental and program issues at these schools. A database of school renovation and maintenance needs will be developed in conjunction with school boards. This database will assist the Department in establishing renovation and maintenance needs for schools in 2003-04 and beyond. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

Availability of school facilities for purposes other than education varies across the province, in terms of ease of access, rates and hours of availability. A policy framework has been developed to equalize access, standardize rates charged, and ensure facilities are available for community and youth use for as many hours as possible. In 2003-04, the Department will introduce the policy framework and assist school boards to effectively adjust their present practices. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

Implementation of the Human Resources and Payroll (SAP) modules in school boards will continue. This is part of a larger initiative to improve the administrative systems of school boards. In fiscal year 2001-02, SAP's finance and procurement modules were implemented. The project to implement the HR and Payroll modules is being undertaken jointly with the Province, who are also putting these modules in place. The initiative was started in 2002-03 and will continue through 2003-04 with an anticipated end date in fiscal 2004-05. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

The Human Resources & Legal Services Branch, introduced in 2002-03, will continue the implementation of the plan to provide enhanced support activities both internally and to school boards. This support is associated with the move to single tier bargaining, putting into operation the new Teachers' Provincial Agreement, and the fulfilment of the human resources aspects of the *Financial Measures Act* and to maximize the value of dollars spent for legal advice. It will also support school boards in addressing current and emerging issues and enhancing effective human resources planning in the education system. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education, Corporate Policy)

In fiscal year 2003-04, the Department of Education will continue to work with school boards to explore funding models that ensure equity in the distribution of public education funds. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

The Department will undertake a review of facilities operations in the Southwest Regional School Board to determine the standard of service and the efficiency of service delivery, and to ensure these meet Provincial standards. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

The Department will continue to work with the Nova Scotia School Boards Association (NSSBA) to improve school board governance. Improvements will be made to the processes and systems used to monitor and report school board activity. (In conjunction with Primary-12 Education)

As well, the Department will work with the school boards operating under the pilot governance model to improve their administrative structures and processes. The Department will monitor and evaluate these changes with a view to potential structures when the pilots are scheduled to end in 2004 in accordance with the *Education Act*.

7. Budgeting Context

Department of Education - Estimated Budget Expenditures by Core Business			
	Actual 2001/02 ($Millions)	**Forecast 2002/03 ($Millions)**	**Budget 2003/04 ($Millions)**
Total Program Expenses - Gross Current	1171.6	1180.0	1225.7
Net Program Expenses - Net of Recoveries	1106.1	1136.9	1,186
Salaries and Benefits	16.3	18.4	22.2
Funded Staff (FTEs) Net	323.2	335.5	373.3

In the 2002-03 fiscal year, the department incurred a deficit of $6,454,000 representing a 0.6% variance from its approved budget of $1,130,465,000. The over expenditure was as a result of a number of variances from budgeted amounts. Variances comprising the total forecast over expenditure are as follows:

Public Education Funding	$ (3,789,000)
Higher Education	1,779,000
School Capital Amortization	1,211,000
Community College Grants	(377,000)
Public Schools	(332,000)
Other	84,000
Sub total	$ (1,424,000)
Assistance to Universities	(5,030,000)
Total	$ (6,454,000)

In the 2003/04 fiscal year the department will increase the Education and Assistance to University budgets by $55,581,000, reflecting a 4.9% increase in budgeted funding. The major areas of increase are as follows:

Public Education Funding	$ 37,369,000
School Capital Amortization	3,913,000
Community College Grants	2,523,000
Skills and Learning	3,519,000
Teachers Pensions	2,092,000
Public Schools Branch	142,000
Human Resources and Legal Services	338,000
Higher Education	1,189,000
Assistance to Universities	4,073,000
Other	423,000
Total	$ 55,581,000

The increase in Public Education Funding represents net increases in annual salary and benefit costs of $24,737,000; $43,623,000 inclusive of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union collective agreement arbitration; increases in funding for class size reduction and special education initiatives of $4,667,000 and the associated pension costs of $333,000 (a total of $5,000,000); and net operational funding increases of $2,269,000. These increases are offset by budget reductions due to enrollment-related declines of $10,270,000 and municipal sharing in the funding of public education costs of $2,920,000.

The increase in School Capital Amortization reflects increased depreciation associated with the completion of new school construction; and the completion of school facility additions, repairs and renovations.

Increases in community college grants reflect increases in wages, benefits, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union collective agreement arbitration award, and growth for the Nova Scotia Community College, net of the Collège de l'Acadie merger with the Université Sainte-Anne.

Increased funding for Skills and Learning reflects an increase the investment in the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and funding provided to implement the Nova Scotia Skills initiative.

The increase in Public Schools will be used to address initiatives associated with African Canadian students; assessment, evaluation and reporting; math; literacy; and the new Code of Conduct.

The increase in Higher Education reflects the introduction of the Student Debt Management program offset by anticipated program savings including savings due to interest rates.

The increase in Assistance to Universities is as a result of funding for pre-employment programs at the University College of Cape Breton, transfers for the Dalhousie School of Nursing from the Department of Health to the Department of Education, anticipated recoveries from MPHEC, and operational funding increases to universities.

The increase in Human Resources and Legal services reflect the new mandate relative to collective bargaining issues at the school board level.

The increase in Teachers Pensions reflect additional costs associated with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union collective agreement arbitration award ($1,759,000) and special education initiatives ($333,000).

8. Outcome Measures

Note: New outcome measures are noted with an asterisk [*]

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education				
Better Educated Nova Scotians	SAIP results (16-year-olds) Percentage at Level 3 or above	Reading (1998): 66% Writing (1998): 89% Math (1997): 47% Science (1999): 75%	Reading (2005): 72% Writing (2002): Increase Math (2006): 50% Science (2004): Increase	• Expand *Active Young Readers/Lecteurs actifs* initiatives to grade 8 • Introduce *Writers in Action* initiative at grade 5 and *Écrivains à l'oeuvre* initiative at grade 4 • Implement teaching resources for mathematics grades P-9 • Mandate instructional time allotment for language arts and mathematics for grades P-9 • Implement new science program for grades P-2 • Provide teaching resources for chemistry and physics • Provide new text books for Physics
	PISA Results (15-year-olds) Scale score	Reading (2000): 521 Math (2000): 513 Science (2000) 516	Reading (2003): 534 Math (2003): 533 Science (2003): 529	
	Nova Scotia Examinations Results (grade 12) Percent passing	English (2001): 67% Chemistry (2001): 65% Physics (2001): 40%	English: 70% Chemistry: 70% Physics: 60%	
	Graduation Rate	79.1% (1999-00)	Increase	• Continue implementation of *Youth Pathways and Transitions* strategy

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education				
Safe and Healthy Learning Environment	Percentage of grade 8 students reporting that they agree with the statement "I feel safe from personal harm"	68%	70%	• Support *Code of Conduct* implementation through professional development • Develop *Code of Conduct Guidelines* • Develop teacher guide on positive behavioural interventions
	Percentage of schools implementing *Physical Education Safety Guidelines*	0% (2001-02)	100%	• Implementation of *Physical Education Safety Guidelines*
	Percentage of schools implementing Science Safety Guidelines	0% (2001-02)	100%	• Implementation of *Science Safety Guidelines*

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education				
Healthy students	Percentage of students in grades 7, 9, 10 and 12, using cigarettes at least once in the past year	36.1% (1998)	Decrease	• Implementation of new curriculum and resources for Health Education grades 4-6 • Provision of Smoke-Free for Live resources • Participate in projects that examine the relationship between health and education
	Percentage of physically active students in grades 3, 7, and 11*	PACY Research Study 2002	Increase	• Implementation of physical education curriculum and related time requirements • Pilot Activ8 resources • Conduct active school communities pilots
Informed and involved parents	Number of hits on interactive website and downloads of resource material*	To be developed	Increase	• Develop innovative and useful interactive website
Accessibility	Primary-12 computer ratio	1:9.3 Pentium 200 or greater 1:6.2 all computers (2002)	5:1 all computers (target set for 2005/06)	• Continue *Information Economy Initiative* in grades 4-6 • Continue Technology Recycling Program

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education				
Responsive and flexible learning environment	Number of recommendations of BLAC report that have been implemented	2001: 13 of 30 recommendations implemented	2005: 20 of 30 recommendations implemented	• Continue implementation of BLAC report recommendations • Workshops for African Nova Scotian parents on supporting children's learning
	Percentage of schools in-servicing Racial Equity Policy	0% (2001-02)	100%	• Racial Equity Policy professional development
	Number of French curriculum courses in Acadian schools *	Based on number of French curriculum courses currently available in Acadian schools	Increase	• Consultation on specific needs • Implementation of recommendations • Full implementation of Français Pré-emploi Histoire du Canada 11 and Études acadiennes 11
	Number of courses implemented to reflect ethnocultural diversity*	2002 (3 new courses)	Additional 4 courses	• Implement African Heritage Literature 12 pilot • Continue to support implementation of African Canadian Studies 11, Gaelic Studies 11, Mi'kmaq Language 10 • Implement Mi'kmaq Studies 7 • Develop Mi'kmaq Language 8 • Develop Gaelic Language 10

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Primary-12 Education				
Improved accountability/ reporting of results	Reporting of Assessment Results	First report in 2001-02	Annually	• Minister's Report to Parents
Core Business Area: Higher Education				
Better Educated Nova Scotians	Percent of Nova Scotians aged 25-54 with post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	58% of Nova Scotians aged 25-54 (2000)	Increase	• Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities discussions • Nova Scotia Community College growth strategy • Université Sainte-Anne/ Collège de l'Acadie merger • Improvements to the Student Assistance Program
	Number of diplomas, certificates and degrees issued by Nova Scotia institutions	12,124 (1999)	Increase	
Accessibility	Total post-secondary enrollment	42% of Nova Scotians aged 18-24 (1998-99)	Increase	• Improvements to the Student Assistance Program • Nova Scotia Community College growth strategy

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Skills and Learning				
Better Educated Nova Scotians	Number of certifications issued through the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Program*	641 (2001-02)	Increase	• Youth Apprenticeship • Apprenticeship Essential Skills Initiative • Construction Trades Skill Development Initiative (CTSDI) • Apprenticeship and Construction Trades Training Partnership
	Number of adult Nova Scotians participating in literacy and upgrading through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning	3700 (2001-02)	Increase	• Implementation of the Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning • Community Learning Initiative
	Number of adult Nova Scotians graduating with the NS High School Graduation Diploma for adults	154 (2001-02)	Increase	• Administration of the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults
	Number of Nova Scotians successfully completing the GED Tests*	1638 (2000-01)	1700	• Administration of the GED Testing Service

Outcome	Measure	Data	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Better Educated Nova Scotians	Number of participants in Workplace/ Workforce Education programs*	1,000 (estimate) (2001)	Increase	• *Development of Workplace Education and Workforce Adjustment Programs*
Young Nova Scotians engaged in government decisions affecting their communities	Number of youth participating in discussions of issues on the NS Youth Secretariat web site bulletin board*	2003-04 figures	Increase	• Support of the Provincial Student Education Council and the Nova Scotia Youth Advisory Council • Maintenance and promotion of the Youth Secretariat webs site
	Number of issues addressed by PSEC and YAC for NS Government*	2003-04 figures	Increase	
Young Nova Scotians making a successful transition to the workforce	Number of young Nova Scotians participating in career and related employment opportunities*	2003-04 program year numbers	Increase	• Administration of the Provincial Employment Program